



# Press Release



**Congressman John Conyers, Jr.  
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**Ranking Member, U.S. House Judiciary Committee  
Dean, Congressional Black Caucus**

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## **Conyers to Introduce Legislation Regarding Price Gouging and Bankruptcy to Limit Financial Fallout from Hurricane; Pleads for More Effective Federal Response**

When Congress returns next week, I am planning to introduce several important initiatives as Ranking Member of the Judiciary Committee. First, I plan to introduce legislation explicitly giving the federal government authority to pursue price gouging actions -- price gouging is a national problem, and it warrants a national response. Second, I am introducing a law to amend the Bankruptcy Code so that the most onerous provisions of the new law, scheduled to take effect October 17, do not inflict damage on the millions of victims of Hurricane Katrina and their families. While these steps won't save lives, they will help alleviate the massive financial burdens in the Gulf and around the nation.

What we have before us is an unvarnished human catastrophe, and it will require an unprecedented national effort to save lives and rebuild. There is no sugarcoating how we got here. There is little doubt the Administration has underfunded flood protection in New Orleans. There is little doubt FEMA and the military not only did not prepare adequately for the likelihood of flooding in a city below sea level that is in a hurricane prone area. There is little doubt that even after the Hurricane hit, our government was slow and unimaginative in its response.

While we will need to study those mistakes at some point, the task before us today is alleviating the ongoing hardship we see every day. At some point the president will also need to reevaluate the individuals he has placed in charge of FEMA. Clearly, it is unacceptable to have a director who is unaware that the New Orleans Convention Center is being used to house hurricane victims, and a deputy director who asserts that FEMA's performance is "probably one of the most efficient and effective responses in the country's history."

Our nation can and must do better for the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

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